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THE IMPORTANCE OF HELLENISM FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF INDIC-PHILOLOGY. I

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The aim of this paper is to place before classicists in a brief and compact form the evidence (down to the first century A.D.) which proves that there was intercourse between India and the West. India was not entirely cut off by its mountain barriers; it was in touch with Europe and with the rest of Asia. During the Hellenistic period India was in close contact with Alexandria, Syria, and Rome, and played a large part in the commerce of the world.

India has had much stirring history and thriving objective life as well as world-renouncing religions and philosophies; but she has had few historians, and their works are so mixed with fables as to be unsafe guides. Apart from the inscriptions, which have been coming to light in increasing numbers from the third century B.C., there are few historical facts recorded in literature, and few of these pieces of literature can be dated accurately. For the early period we are largely dependent on the evidence of Greek and Chinese literature. The interest of the Brahmans was religious, and with very few exceptions our whole preserved literature was the peculiar property of the Brahmans. Worldly knowledge was useless for the purpose of reaching religious goals. The men who did travel by land or voyage by sea, and there were many of them, did not write literature and had no thought of posterity.

It is not my intention to deal with parallels of thought, with possible connection between Indian and Greek fables and romances, between early Buddhism or Hinduism and Christianity, between Indian and Greek drama, medicine, and mathematics, between Indian philosophy and Pythagoreanism, Gnosticism, and neo-Platonism. The parallels should be collected even more carefully than they have been, but very little reliance can be placed on mere etymologies and parallels of phrase and thought as proof of borrowing. I shall present only the most important bits of historical evidence.

For the period before the conquest of northwestern India by Darius at the end of the sixth century B.C. there is no very definite evidence of intercourse between India and the West. The mythical accounts of invasions of India by Semiramis, Dionysos, Herakles, and Cyrus merit no credence whatever. Comparisons of early Indian philosophy and fables with the philosophy of Pythagoras and the fables of Aesop are based on questionable etymologies and inconclusive resemblances of thought. There is as yet no certain proof of borrowing. The accounts of India given by Skylax, Hekataeus, Herodotus, and Ktesias are vague, but the details can hardly all be based on the observations of Skylax. There must have been considerable intercourse between Persia and India after the end of the sixth century, but so far as the present evidence goes there is no reason to believe that there was any vital interchange of ideas. *Qui peregrinantur rare sanctificantur*, or as Strabo (xv. 1. 64) remarks in the words of the Indian sage Mandanis: "I am entitled to indulgence, if, while conversing by means of three interpreters, who, except the language, understand nothing we say any more than the vulgar, I am unable to demonstrate the utility of philosophy. One might as well expect water to flow pure through mud." Even Megasthenes, who lived for years in India at the royal court and has given a most accurate account of externals, misunderstood the essentials of Indian religion and philosophy. The most important fact is this. The Indian Brahmi alphabet was certainly borrowed from some Semitic alphabet.¹ This implies commercial intercourse with the West, but

¹ See Bühler, "Indische Palaeographie," in *Grundriss der indo-arischen Philologie* (p. 17), and "*On the Origin of the Indian Brāhma Alphabet*," (2d ed.; Strassburg, 1898). He argues for 800 B.C. as the date of borrowing. Kennedy (*JRAS* [1898], pp. 274-75) argues for 600 B.C. None of the Indian evidence for the existence of writing can be

it is doubtful whether much interchange of ideas was involved, and the date of the borrowing is uncertain. Far-reaching conclusions have been based on the supposed occurrence of the names of four Vedic gods in the Boghazköi inscriptions of the fourteenth century B.C. It is very doubtful whether the names are Indo-Iranian at all.¹ No reliance can be placed on the flimsy etymologies which are used to back up the assertion that the ships sent by Solomon to Ophir brought back Indian products. The collection of material made by Kennedy² and Rawlinson³ for the pre-Persian period is of very doubtful value. It is by no means certain that the elephant on the obelisk of Shalmaneser (ninth century B.C.) implies communication with India. Even the evidence presented by Kennedy⁴ concerning a beam supposed to be of Indian cedar in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar (604–562 B.C.) and two logs of teak in a temple at Ur (555–538 B.C.) is not conclusive. No reliance can be placed on the statement of Ammianus Marcellinus (xxiii. 6. 33) that Hystaspes, the father of Darius, was influenced by Indian philosophy (*qui cum superioris Indiae secreta fidentius penetraret*).⁵ Recently Clay⁶ has reported that among the accounts of the Babylonian merchants Murashu and Sons (fifth century B.C.) there is a reference to a settlement of *Hi-in-da-ai*, and has suggested that it refers to Indians. If so we have an easy explanation of the presence of rice and peacocks in Athens at the end of the fifth century.⁷ The Hebrew and Egyptian evidence taken by

dated with certainty before the fourth, possibly the fifth century. See Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 107 ff., for the Buddhist material. The earliest Greek evidence is Nearchus *apud* Strabo (xv. 1. 67). That is 325 B.C. There is no way of dating the initial borrowing, and it is not certain as yet whether the model was a north Semitic or a south Semitic alphabet. See W. Max Müller, *OLZ* (1912), pp. 541–44.

¹ See Clark, "The Alleged Indo-Iranian Names in Cuneiform Inscriptions," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* (1917), pp. 261 ff.

² "The Early Commerce of Babylon with India," *JRAS* (1898), pp. 241–88.

³ *Intercourse between India and the Western World*, pp. 1–15.

⁴ *JRAS* (1898), pp. 266–67.

⁵ See Weber, *Indische Skizzen*, p. 78, n. 2.

⁶ *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. 10, p. viii.

⁷ See Kennedy, *JRAS* (1898), pp. 268–69. Strabo (xv. 1. 62) reports at Taxila (on the authority of Aristobulus) a marriage market managed on Babylonian principles, and remarks that at Taxila the dead were exposed to vultures (a Zoroastrian custom). The Baveru Jātaka (339) reports that a ship sailed with a peacock to a place suspected of being Babylon (Babiru). Cf. Minayeff, *Mélanges Asiatiques* (1871), p. 577. The story may go back to the fifth century. Aelian (*De natura animalium* xi. 33) tells of an Indian peacock which was received as a present by an Egyptian king, but no date is given. It doubtless refers to a much later period.

Schoff¹ as proof of an active trade from India at an early date needs a detailed and critical treatment. As yet it proves nothing.

Toward the end of the sixth century B.C. Darius sent the Greek Skylax of Caryanda in Caria on an expedition across Persia, down the Indus by boat, and along the coast of Persia and Arabia to Arsinoe (near Suez).² The voyage lasted two years and a half (Herod. iv. 44). His memoirs have perished. After this voyage of exploration, Darius conquered the northwestern part of India to the Indus, and "made use of that sea."³ The conquered country was organized into the twentieth satrapy and paid a yearly tribute of 360 Euboic talents of gold dust (Herod. iii. 94). At the time of Alexander's invasion of India this territory was again under the control of Indian princes. Indians were in the army of Xerxes and took part in the battle of Plataea (Herod. vii. 65 and viii. 113). Indians were in the army of Darius which fought against Alexander (Arrian iii. 8; iii. 4. 6; and iii. 11. 5). They were probably from the Indian borderland. If Ktesias, who for many years (*ca.* 415–398 B.C.) lived as physician at the Persian court, had had more intellectual curiosity and less Greek pride we might have had preserved much valuable information concerning the intercourse between Persia and India during this important period.

A few scattered references show that even during the Persian period many Greeks found their way, unwillingly, into Bactria and eastern Iran. Herodotus (vi. 9) reports that before the battle of Lade, during the revolt of the Ionian Greeks (*ca.* 494 B.C.), the Persian commanders threatened the rebels with banishment into Bactria. Bactria seems to have been used by the Persians as a Siberia. Curtius (vii. 5. 28–35) and Strabo (xi. 11. 4 and xiv. 1. 5) relate that Xerxes settled the Branchidae beyond the Oxus in Sogdiana. They had betrayed to the Persians the temple of Apollo at Didyma and were moved in order to preserve them from the vengeance of their countrymen in Miletus. Many years later, when Alexander marched

¹ *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, p. 228.

² See Berger, *Geschichte der wissenschaftlichen Erdkunde der Griechen*, pp. 61, 73–74; Reese, *Die griechischen Nachrichten über Indien*, pp. 39–52.

³ See Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 40, n. 2. The Hindus are first mentioned in the Persepolis inscription of Darius. They are not yet mentioned in the Behistun inscription. See Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achaemeniden*, p. 83.

into Sogdiana, the descendants of these exiled Greeks streamed out joyfully to meet him, talking in broken Greek. He ordered them massacred to a man because their ancestors had betrayed the Greek cause. That was five generations before; they still spoke some Greek. Curtius alone reports the story which is discreditable to Alexander. Herodotus (iv. 204) reports that Darius settled the inhabitants of Barke (in Libya) in Bactria. They were still there in the time of Herodotus, living in a town named Barke. Apparently these are the people referred to by Arrian (iii. 28. 7). In both cases, doubtless, women as well as men were transported. In this connection it is curious that among the tribes which live in the mountain valleys north of India there is a persistent tradition among the chiefs to the effect that they are descended from Alexander. Persian coins and Athenian "owls" (minted until 322 B.C.) circulated in the Punjab and were imitated there.¹

The next definite date is furnished by the invasion of Alexander. He crossed the Indus in 326 B.C. and remained in India about a year and a half. He founded over seventy Greek colonies in the east,² of which according to Justin (xii. 5) Alexandria on the Tanais and twelve others, according to Strabo (xi. 11. 4) eight,³ were situated in Bactria and Sogdiana. These were not merely military colonies on strategic roads, but were located on important trade routes. The modern cities of Herat and Kandahar are on the sites of colonies of Alexander. Curtius (vii. 3. 23) states that at Alexandria near the Hindu-Kush seven thousand "Caucasii" and Macedonians were settled. Diodorus (xvii. 83. 2) reports that a day's journey from here other cities were founded in which were settled seven thousand barbarians, three thousand camp followers, and of the soldiers those who volunteered. Justin (xii. 5) refers to the most unruly of the soldiers (*seditiones*) as colonists in Bactria and Sogdiana.⁴ Arrian (iv. 4. 1)

¹ See Rapson, "Indian Coins," in *Grundriss der Indo-arischen Philologie*, p. 3 and Plate I, Nos. 5-7.

² For an enumeration and description of these see Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, III (2d ed.), 189-358. For Alexander's campaign in India see Vincent Smith, *Early History of India*, pp. 49-114.

³ Is Alexandria on the Tanais included by Justin among the twelve? Gutschmid (*Geschichte Irans*, p. 5, n. 3) suggests that XII in Justin is a corruption for VII.

⁴ Tarn (*JHS*, XXII, 269 and n. 5) thinks that Justin is wise after the event, basing his statement on the revolt of the Greeks in Bactria after the death of Alexander.

in speaking of Alexandria on the Tanais refers to Greek mercenaries, barbarians who volunteered, and Macedonians who were unfit for service. Curtius (vii. 6. 27) says that captives who were freed were left as colonists in Alexandria on the Tanais. The words of Curtius (ix. 7. 1) *Graeci milites, nuper in colonias a rege deducti* evidently refers to fresh contingents sent to the colonies.¹ Diodorus (xviii. 7) relates that after the death of Alexander twenty-three thousand Greeks in Bactria, who had remained there only out of fear of Alexander, revolted and started to march back home. They were intercepted by Pithon and defeated in battle. Those who escaped death in battle were treacherously butchered.²

It is not known how many Greeks remained permanently in Bactria, Sogdiana, and India; it is not known how far their city government and culture approximated to that of the mother-land. When Edmunds³ speaks of a whole lost literature in Bactrian, Sogdian, and Greek which served as a vehicle for Buddhist propaganda in the West it is a gross exaggeration not based on a scrap of evidence. Diodorus (xviii. 4. 4) states that Alexander decreed that there should be "interchanges between cities and that people should be transferred out of Asia into Europe and conversely out of Europe into Asia to the end that the two great continents by intermarriages and interchanges of good offices might become homogeneous and established in mutual friendship." But the only trace of the Greek language in the Far East is on coins. That must imply that Greek was not dead, but it is a far cry to a "whole lost literature." So far not a Greek inscription, not a scrap of literature in Greek has been found. The history of the Greek language and of Greek culture east of the Euphrates still remains to be written.⁴ A certain Apollodorus of Artemita (in Babylonia) was the chief source of Strabo (cf. ii. 5. 12) for Bactria and Parthia, but we hear of no Bactrian Greeks who wrote history or any other kind of literature.

¹ See Tarn, *JHS*, XXII, 269, n. 5, and Gutschmid, *Geschichte Irans*, pp. 4-6, for a general discussion of the colonies.

² See also Curtius (ix. 7) for the turbulence of Bactria.

³ *The Monist*, XXII, 635, and *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, I (4th ed.), 184.

⁴ Minns ("Parchments of the Parthian Period from Avroman in Kurdistan," *JHS*, XXXV, 22 ff.) has important material, but from much farther west.

Plutarch¹ tells that after its conquest by Alexander Asia read Homer, and that the children of the Persians, Susans, and Gedrosians sang the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles. He also reports² that the Parthian king Orodes was watching the performance of a scene from the Bacchae when the head of Crassus was brought in. Further, he says³ that Alexander, while in the Far East, sent for the plays of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus. Compare the statement of Dio Chrysostom (liii. 6)⁴ and Aelian (*V.H.* xii. 48) that the Indians read Homer in translations. This is doubtless based on some slight knowledge of the subject-matter of the two great Indian epics.⁵ There is also a statement of Seneca⁶ that the Persians and Indians talked Greek, and the statement of Philostratus that Apollonius was addressed in Greek by the Indians.⁷ Compare also the passage of an anonymous treatise *De Brachmanis*⁸ of doubtful date and value:

We do not know those tumultuous gatherings, those games and spectacles which cause you delight. What good would be your comedians among a people which despises that profession and which does nothing which could be turned into ridicule? There does not take place among us cruel scenes suited to furnish material for your tragedies. The Brahmins would shudder if they saw young persons exposed to savage beasts or saw strong men attack and kill each other with *sang-froid*.

The passage, if not merely rhetorical, evidently refers to a much later period than the one now under discussion. The Greek letter sent to Augustus by an Indian king may be historical.⁹ Bloch describes what

¹ *De Fortuna Alex.* in the Didot ed. of *Moralia* 403. 22.

² *Life of Crassus* xxxiii. Crassus, according to Plutarch (*ibid.* xvi), entertained the desire of conquering India.

³ *Life of Alexander* viii.

⁴ Edited by Dindorf ii. 165. 15.

⁵ See Weber, *Indische Studien*, II, 161-69.

⁶ *Consolatio ad Helviam* 6: "Quid sibi volunt in mediis barbarorum regionibus Graecae urbes? quid inter Indos Persasque Macedonicus sermo?"

⁷ *Life of Apollonius* iii. 12. For a summary of the story of Apollonius by one who believes in its historicity see Petrie, *Personal Religion in Egypt*, pp. 139-65.

⁸ Quoted by Sylvain Lévi, *Le théâtre indien*, Appendix, p. 60. The letter is said to have been written to Alexander by the Brahman Dandamis.

⁹ Strabo (xv. 1. 73). Priaulx (*JRAS* [1860], p. 321) believes that the letter was written in Alexandria. See Kennedy, *JRAS* (1912), pp. 983 ff.; 1913, pp. 121-24, for an attempt to prove, on the basis of Greek legends on coins, that Greek was spoken in India until the end of the first century A.D. Compare Tarn, *JHS*, XXII, 286. It is

he believes to be the ruins of a small Greek amphitheater at Ramgarh.¹ Marshall describes a piece of Gandhāra pottery which may possibly depict a scene from the Antigone.²

By about 317 B.C. India was free from Greek rule.³ The fate of the garrisons is unknown. Did they escape from the country? Were they slain? Did they intermarry and amalgamate with the Indians? Alexander had reached only the western edge of the country. His meteoric course through the western borders of India was so far away from the literary centers that he did not even succeed in getting his name into Indian literature: No traces of the cities founded in India, no traces of the twelve stone altars erected to mark the limits of his conquests have been preserved.⁴

Seleucus Nikator, after he had established himself firmly in Iran, emulated Alexander by making an expedition into India. Apparently he reached the Indus. Whether he was actually defeated by Chandragupta or was forced to turn back by gathering clouds in the west is uncertain; at any rate he concluded a treaty not very favorable to himself.⁵ He ceded to Chandragupta eastern Afghanistan up to the Hindu Kush mountains and gave to him a daughter in marriage. In return he received five hundred elephants of which he made good use in the battle of Ipsos (302 B.C.). This Chandragupta is one of the most interesting and important figures in Indian history. At the time of Alexander's invasion India was split up into a large number of small states. The chief of these was Magadha on the lower Ganges. Alexander was told that the king of Magadha had

noteworthy that the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (first century A.D.) and Ptolemy (second century A.D.) have no knowledge of Greek as a spoken language in India. Yet in the *Parthian Stations* of Isidore of Charax (first century A.D.) are several references to "Greek cities" just west and east of the Euphrates (Müller, *Geog. Graeci Minores*, I, 246-50), and even Alexandropolis in Arachosia is called a "Greek city" (*ibid.*, p. 254). There is no mention of Greek as a spoken language, but Greek influence must still have been strong.

¹ *Report of the Archaeological Survey of India* (1903-4), pp. 126 ff.; the evidence is not conclusive. See Lüders, *ZDMG*, LVIII, 868, and "Über die Anfänge des indischen Dramas," *Sitz. Munich Akad.* (1914), p. 23.

² *JRAS* (1909), pp. 1060-61.

³ Justin (xv. 4) and Diodorus (xix. 14).

⁴ See Vincent Smith, *Early History of India*, pp. 76-78.

⁵ Strabo xvi. 2. 9. See the source material in Vincent Smith, *Early History of India*, pp. 119, 149-51.

an army of more than 200,000 men. Chandragupta, who is named Sandrokottos in the Greek sources, was apparently an illegitimate member of the reigning dynasty of Magadha. For some crime he had been forced to flee to the northwest. He met Alexander and gave him enticing descriptions of the wealth of eastern India.¹ What actually happened after the death of Alexander is not known. At any rate when Seleucus invaded India some twenty-five years later Chandragupta was not only on the throne of Magadha but was master of a large part of India and had begun the consolidation of his great empire.² In the ancient world much could happen in twenty-five years. A year was as long and as eventful to the ancients as it is to us.

Seleucus sent to the court of Chandragupta an ambassador named Megasthenes (*ca.* 302 B.C.), who lived there for many years and wrote a book on India, the most valuable of the early Greek accounts which have come down to us in any considerable fragments.³ The details given by him have been accepted by historians in a half-hearted way. Recently there was discovered a Sanskrit text ascribed to Cānakya, the prime minister of Chandragupta, which corroborates in almost every detail the account of Megasthenes.⁴ His reputation as a "trustworthy man" (Arrian v. 5. 1) is fully substantiated. Strabo (ii. 1. 9) wrongly calls him the second greatest liar who had written about India. According to him the city Pātaliputra, of which the population was 400,000, stretched in the inhabited quarters to a length of over nine miles and was a mile and a half broad. It was surrounded by a ditch 600 feet wide and 30 cubits deep. The wall, which was of wood, was crowned by 570 towers and had 64 gates. Remains of the wooden palisades have been found. Excavations of

¹ Spooner ("The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History," *JRAS* [1915], pp. 416-17) has tried to prove that Chandragupta was a Persian who entered India with the army of Alexander. His conclusions go far beyond the facts, and are improbable.

² His grandson Aśoka ruled all of India except the extreme southern tip. We know that he waged only one war, in Kalinga. Whether the great conquests were made by Chandragupta or by his successor Bindusāra is not known.

³ Edited by Schwanbeck (Bonn, 1846); translated by McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*.

⁴ Translated by Shamasastri in *Indian Antiquary*, 1909-10 (books v-xv), and two volumes published at Mysore containing books i-iv. See also *Indian Antiquary* (1905), v. 47. 110; Law, *Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity* (New York, 1914); Banerjea, *Public Administration in Ancient India* (London, 1916); Aiyangar, *Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity* (Madras, 1916).

the site have been undertaken. We hope for important discoveries. The splendors of Açoka's city, rebuilt in stone, were such that later ages could not believe that the city had been built by human hands, and ascribed its building to demons. Fa Hien, a Chinese pilgrim who visited the city shortly after 400 A.D., says:¹ "The royal palace and halls in the midst of the city, which exist now as of old, were all made by spirits which he employed, and which piled up the stones, reared the walls and gates, and executed the elegant carvings and inlaid sculpture-work,—in a way which no human hands of this world could accomplish." Compare with this Aelian (*De natura animalium* xiii. 18. 1): "In the Indian royal palace where the greatest of all the kings of the country resides, there are many things which are calculated to excite admiration, wonders with which neither Susa in all its glory, nor the magnificence of Ekbatana can hope to vie."² According to Phylarchus (third century B.C.) Chandragupta sent, with other gifts, presents of drugs (aphrodisiacs) to his father-in-law Seleucus.³ Unexpected light is thrown on this passage by the recently discovered Kautilya Arthaśāstra, which proves that much attention was paid to medicine in India in the third century B.C. or not much later. Store-rooms in which large quantities of medicines were kept are referred to. Physicians were divided into four classes, ordinary physicians, those who dealt with poisons, those who were expert in childbirth, and army surgeons. Women nurses accompanied the armies. Medicinal herbs were cultivated under government supervision. The state controlled medical practice. Every case of dangerous disease had to be reported to the government. If carelessness of the physician caused death he was severely fined. Aggravation of the disease by neglect of the physician was equivalent to an assault. In certain cases the body had to be brought to the morgue for a post-mortem.⁴

¹ Legge, *The Travels of Fa-Hien*, p. 77.

² For the magnificence of the Indian court and the splendor of the processions see Strabo (xv. 1. 69) and Curtius (viii. 9. 23 ff.). Compare the account of the gorgeous processions of Ptolemy Philadelphus in Athenaeus (v. 25 ff.), and of Antiochos Epiphanes (*ibid.* v. 22-24). Is there any connection between them?

³ Athenaeus i. 32; Müller, *Hist. Graec. Frag.*, I, 344. For the attention paid to aphrodisiacs in India see Schmidt, *Beiträge zur indischen Erotik*; cf. Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* ix. 18. 9.

⁴ The evidence is summed up by Law, *Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity*, pp. 88-97. For medical treatment of cattle, horses, and elephants see Law, *ibid.*, pp. 26-27, 49, 65-66. For notices of Indian drugs see Aristobulus *apud* Strabo (xv. 1. 22); Megasthenes *apud* Strabo (xv. 1. 59); Arrian *Indica* (i. 15).

Further corroboration is found in an inscription of Aṣoka some fifty years later:

Everywhere in the dominions of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, as well as among his neighbors, such as the Cholas, Pāndyas, the Sati-yaputras, the Keralaputras, as far as Ceylon, Antiochos the Greek (Yona) king, or the kings bordering on the said Antiochos—everywhere has His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King made curative arrangements for men and curative arrangements for beasts. Medicinal herbs, also, wholesome for men and wholesome for beasts, wherever they were lacking, everywhere have been both imported and planted. Roots, too, and fruits, wherever they were lacking, have been both imported and planted.¹

According to Strabo (ii. 1. 9) Deimachos was sent as envoy to Bindusāra, the successor of Chandragupta.² He too wrote a book about India. Strabo (*loc. cit.*) calls him the greatest liar who had ever written about India. Was he more accurate in his estimate of Deimachos than in his estimate of Megasthenes? According to Hegesander (third century B.C.) Bindusāra wrote to Antiochos Soter asking Antiochos to sell him sweet wine, figs, and a sophist. Antiochos sent the sweet wine and the figs, but replied that it was not the Greek custom to sell sophists.³ Pliny (*N.H.* vi. 58) reports that Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–247 B.C.) sent as envoy to India a certain Dionysios who wrote a book on geography often quoted with approval by later writers.⁴ Patrokles, governor of Babylon under Seleucus, wrote a book on the countries between India and the Caspian. It is cited with commendation by Strabo (ii. 1. 9) and was held in high esteem by Eratosthenes. There was a large lost literature dealing with India and the Far East. About twenty writers left accounts of the campaigns of Alexander.

Aṣoka reigned from about 272 B.C. From him we have a large number of inscriptions, the first in India, carved on pillars and rocks.⁵

¹ Vincent Smith, *Asoka*, pp. 156–57.

² By Seleucus or by Antiochos Soter? See Müller, *Hist. Graec. Frag.*, II, 440.

³ Athenaeus xiv. 67; Müller, *Hist. Graec. Frag.*, IV, 421.

⁴ Cf. Mahaffy, *The Empire of the Ptolemies*, p. 154. Pliny (*N.H.* vi. 59) calls him and Megasthenes untrustworthy: "Non tamen est diligentiae locus, adeo diversa et incredibilia traduntur." Ptolemy may have sent a second envoy. Pliny (vi. 183) reports that during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus a certain Basilis traveled on the Upper Nile. Athenaeus (ix. 43) and Agatharcides (Müller, *Geog. Graeci Minores*, I, 156) report that Basilis wrote a book about India. Cf. Müller, *Hist. Graec. Frag.*, IV, 346–47.

⁵ Translated by Vincent Smith, *Asoka*.

The nearest parallels are the rock-cut inscriptions of Darius. Was Persian influence at work? Before Aṣoka all Indian buildings seem to have been constructed of wood. From his time come our first architectural remains in stone. Is this too due to Persian influence? Spooner, writing on the basis of the incomplete excavations at Pataliputra, describes the great palace there as resembling the Persian palace at Persepolis.¹ From this period also come the first rock-cut temples of India. Again the nearest parallel is the Persian rock-cut temple. The bell-capitals and the crouching, winged lions of some of the Aṣokan pillars closely resemble Persian pillars. The great royal road up the Ganges Valley, nearly 1,200 miles long, is suggestive of the Persian royal road. Megasthenes reports that in Pātaliputra was a board of five men who looked after everything pertaining to foreigners. To these they assigned lodgings and kept watch over their mode of life by means of those persons they gave them for assistants. They escorted them on their way when they left the country, and in the event of their dying forwarded their property to their relatives. They took care of them when they were sick, and if they died buried them.² Further, the Kautilya Arthaśāstra gives details about tolls to be paid at the frontiers and at harbors. Canal routes, along-the-shore routes, and ocean routes are mentioned. China and Chinese silk are referred to.³ There must have been considerable foreign trade, and many foreigners must have come to Pātaliputra. Moreover, in one of the inscriptions of Aṣoka is the following passage:

This is the chiefest conquest in the opinion of His Sacred Majesty—the conquest by the Law of Piety—and this, again, has been won by His Sacred Majesty both in his own dominions and in all the neighboring realms as far as six hundred leagues—where the Greek (Yona) King named Antiochos dwells, and north of that Antiochos to where dwell the four kings severally

¹ "The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History," *JRAS*, LXVI (1915), 405 ff.

² For a comparison of these officers with the Greek *proxenoi* see Vincent Smith, "Consular Offices in India and Greece," *Indian Antiquary*, XXXIV, 200. For a description of the duties of the *proxenoi* see Newton, *Essays on Art and Archaeology*, pp. 121 ff. This seems to be the only element that might point to direct Greek influence. Everything else points to Persia, in case there was borrowing. See *Indian Antiquary* (1905), 201.

³ See Jacobi, *Sitz. Berl. Akad.* (1911), p. 961. The passage will be discussed later.

named Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas, and Alexander (Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene, Epirus); and in the south the realms of the Cholas and Pandyas, with Ceylon likewise—and here too, in the King's dominions, among the Yonas, and Kambojas, among the Nābhapantis of Nābhaka, among the Bhojas and Pitinikas, among the Andhras and Pulindas—everywhere men follow His Sacred Majesty's instruction in the Law of Piety. Even where the envoys of His Sacred Majesty do not penetrate, there too men hearing His Sacred Majesty's ordinance based on the Law of Piety and his instruction in that Law, practise and will practise that Law."

There are in our fragmentary Greek sources no references to Aṣoka and to Buddhist envoys to the west. There are references to Chandragupta and Bindusāra. One would expect that with the further development of the Maurya empire there would be more references to Aṣoka than to his predecessors. Is the gap due merely to the fragmentary character of our Greek sources? Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* i. 15. 71-72 and iii. 7. 60) is the first to give accurate details concerning Buddhism. Whether he used source material earlier than Pantaenus (second century A.D.) is uncertain. Epiphanius (*Weights and Measures* 9) tells that Ptolemy Philadelphus desired to gather into a library the books of all the nations of the world and to have them translated. After a large collection had been made it was reported to the king that many books still remained. Among these are enumerated the books of the Indians. Epiphanius then relates how the king sent to Jerusalem for the sacred books of the Hebrews, but no statement is made to the effect that Indian books were ever obtained or translated. Flinders Petrie¹ makes use of the above-mentioned missionaries to account for the rapid development of asceticism and of the contemplative mode of life in Egypt. It may be so, but at present tangible historic evidence is lacking. Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* i. 13. 71) says that the priests in Bactria were called Samanaioi. This evidently corresponds to Samana, the name of the Buddhist monks. That, however, traces Buddhism only to Bactria, and the date is uncertain. It has usually been assumed that Alexander Polyhistor (first century B.C.) was here Clement's source. He does (*Stromata* iii. 7. 60) quote Alexander Polyhistor, but only as evidence for tenets of the Brahmins, not of the Buddhists. As

¹ *Personal Religion in Egypt*, pp. 57, 62, 82-83. See also Mahaffy, *The Empire of the Ptolemies*, p. 163.

emphasized by Marquart¹ there is no reason for assuming that Alexander Polyhistor was the source for the other passage. Bactria must have been a flourishing country to judge from the statement of Justin (xli. 1), exaggerated as it may be, that Bactria possessed a thousand cities. There is no evidence to show how early Buddhism penetrated into Bactria. Petrie² describes a Ptolemaic gravestone marked with the characteristic Buddhist symbols of the wheel and the triṣūla, with no figures of Egyptian gods. He sees in this the influence of Aḥḥokan missionaries. The inscription deals with a barber (?) who bears a good Egyptian name. It is, however, not certain that the symbols are really Buddhistic at all. Yet the Egyptian name is not conclusive against Petrie's theory. The Indians in Egypt may have intermarried and have taken Egyptian names just as the Greeks in India intermarried and took Indian names. Further, Petrie gives several figures of terra cotta heads from the foreign quarter at Memphis which seem to represent Indians.³ He ascribes them to the period between 500 and 200 B.C. His identification of the figures as Indian is very probable, but the date is uncertain. Some of them look surprisingly like Gandhāra types of the first century A.D. If they are Indian what is their bearing on the supposed Indian colony at Babylonia referred to above, and on the problem of the Aḥḥokan missionaries?

About 250 B.C. Bactria and Parthia revolted from the Seleucids and became independent.⁴ Bactria lasted until about 135 B.C.; Parthia until 226 A.D. Antiochos the Great (ca. 206 B.C.) advanced into northern India and made a treaty with a king named Sophagasenus (Sobhāgasena?) receiving from him a hundred and fifty elephants.⁵ Antiochos had previously tried to reduce Bactria to allegiance, but withdrew with an acknowledgment of its independence

¹ "Erānsahr," in *Abh. Göttingen Akad.*, III (1901), 90 and n. 1. He thinks that Philo was the source.

² *Denderah*, Plate 25a and p. 54.

³ *Memphis I*, Plate 39 and pp. 16-17. *Meydum and Memphis III*, Fig. 140 and p. 46. Petrie refers to the Aswan papyri for corroboration of his theory, based on these terra cotta heads, of an Indian colony in Egypt. I can find nothing in the Aswan papyri to bear out his statement.

⁴ Justin (xli. 4-5); Strabo (xi. 9. 2).

⁵ Polybius (xi. 34. 11-12).

on the plea of Euthydemus that the weakening of the Greek element in Bactria by a long war would cause a lapse into barbarism.¹ This implies that already the pressure exerted by the barbarians on the northern frontier must have been strong. About 190 B.C. Demetrius, king of Bactria, began a series of inroads into India which eventually left him in possession of the whole Indus valley and Gujarat. Strabo (xi. 11. 1 and xv. 1. 3) reports these conquests on the authority of Apollodorus, who wrote a history of Parthia and stated that the Bactrians had conquered more of India than Alexander had.² Conveniently for Demetrius and his successors the great empire founded by Chandragupta broke into fragments about 184 B.C. Possibly Dattāmitra (or Sumitra), king of the Yavanas, in Mahābhārata i. 139, 21-3 represents the name Demetrius.³ Some years later, while Demetrius was in India, Eucratides revolted and finally secured himself in Bactria. Later he even disputed northwestern India with Demetrius and his successors. Greek rule in India lasted until about the middle of the first century A.D., when it was swept away by Scythian invaders. During this period there was no one great Greek kingdom in India. There is a very perplexing series of coins, many very fine ones, exhibiting about forty names during the period of somewhat more than two hundred years. The kings fall into two groups, those who trace their descent from Demetrius, and those who trace their descent from Eucratides. Many of the coins struck in India are bilingual, having Greek on one side and some Indian dialect on the other. The coins struck in Bactria are purely Greek. Before the Greeks came there seems to have been coinage of a sort in India, punch-marked coins of irregular shape without names; but

¹ Polybius (xi. 34. 5).

² The account is very indefinite. The conquest of Ariana and India is ascribed partly to Demetrius, but chiefly to Menander, "if indeed he crossed the Hypanis and advanced eastward as far as the Isamus."

³ Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, II (2d ed.), 359; Weber, *Sitz. Berl. Akad.* (1890), p. 905, n. 5, pp. 906-7, and *Indische Skizzen*, pp. 37, 82-83. Weber's identification of Kaserumān, king of the Yavanas, of Mahābhārata iii. 12. 32 as "Roman Caesar" is uncertain and most unlikely. Cf. *Indische Skizzen*, p. 88, n. 4, and *Sitz. Berl. Akad.* (1890), p. 909. The interpretation of the name Bhagadatta, king of the Yavanas, of Mahābhārata ii. 14. 15 as a transcription of Apollodorus is very uncertain. Cf. Gutschmid, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des alten Orients*, p. 75, and Weber, *Sitz. Berl. Akad.* (1890), p. 907. The other names for which Weber (*Sitz. Berl. Akad.* (1890), p. 905, n. 5) tries to find Greek equivalents are also uncertain.

from this time on the Greco-Bactrian coinage became the model for Indian coinage.¹ There was a large number of small Greek states in India engaged in constant warfare with each other. In Bactria too the Greeks wasted their strength in petty internal dissensions, while a storm of barbarians was gathering on the northern frontiers, a storm destined to sweep away Greek influence in Bactria and India.

Sometime during the second century B.C. (170-165) a tribe called by the Chinese Yueh-chi, which dwelt in Kan-su in Western China, was attacked and defeated by another tribe named Hiung-nu, which lived on the Chinese frontier north of Kan-su. The Hiung-nu, to be equated with Sanskrit Hūna and with our Hun, were Turks; the Yueh-chi are now known to have been Indo-Europeans, probably speaking an Iranian dialect. Defeated they left their homes and wandered northward and westward along the Tien-shan mountains, to Kashgar, Issyk-kul, and the Ili River. There they dispossessed a tribe named Çaka. Herodotus (iii. 93 and vii. 64) speaks of the Sakai and the Caspioi as forming the fifteenth satrapy and as serving in the army of Xerxes; and in the latter passage remarks that the Persians called all Scythians Sakai. Strabo (xi. 8. 2) says that as one goes east from the Caspian one comes first to the Dahae, then to the Massagetae and Sakai. The Çakas are mentioned as early as the Behistun inscription of Darius.² The Greek and Persian evidence shows that such a tribe lived northeast of the Caspian as early as the end of the sixth century B.C.³ The Çakas were driven southward by the Yueh-chi into the mountainous country north of India and into the country now named Seistan⁴ (or Sakastan), and eventually forced

¹ For the Indo-Greek coins see P. Gardner, *The Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India*, 1886; von Sallet, *Die Nachfolger Alexanders des Grossen in Bactrien und Indien*, 1879; V. A. Smith, *Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta*, Vol. I; R. B. Whitehead, *Coins in the Panjab Museum, Lahore*, Vol. I. Pausanias (iii. 12. 4), writing in the second century A.D., is not correct in saying that the Hindus did not know coinage. Kennedy (*JRAS* [1912], pp. 981-1012) sums up the evidence from coins in favor of the assumption that Greek was a spoken language in northwestern India up to the end of the first century A.D. Decourdemanche (*JA*, I [1912], 117-32) makes it probable that the punch-marked coins were based on the Persian monetary system. See also Kennedy, *JRAS* (1898), pp. 275 ff., and Rapson, *Indian Coins*, pp. 2-3.

² See Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden*, pp. 12, 29.

³ See Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, p. 112.

⁴ Was the movement into Seistan a part of this migration, or had the movement thither already taken place, and was it independent of the pressure exerted by the Yueh-chi? See Thomas, "Sakastana," *JRAS* (1906), pp. 181-216; Vincent Smith, "The Çakas in Northern India," *JRAS* (1907), pp. 403 ff.

their way into India itself. The Yueh-chi, driven on by the Turki tribes behind them, crossed the Oxus into Bactria (*ca.* 135 B.C.) and completely swept aside Greek rule there. The Çakas pushed into India, fought with the Greek kingdoms there, and established themselves in several places. For a century or more the Yueh-chi, divided into five branches, dwelt in the fertile valleys of Bactria and the surrounding country. At the end of the first century B.C., or early in the first century A.D., they were united by one man under the rule of the Kushan branch. The Kushans pushed into India and overthrew the Greek and Çaka kingdoms. They founded a mighty empire which covered all of northwestern India, and made their influence felt far into Central Asia. Their rule lasted for two hundred years.¹ The inroads and conquests of the Çakas were accompanied by inroads and conquests of the Parthians (Pahlavas); for the names of several Parthian kings in northwestern India are known from coins.

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¹ For the Yueh-chi, Çakas, and Kushans see Franke, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Türk-völker und Skythen Centralasiens," *Abh. Berl. Akad.*, 1904; Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-kine (Turcs) occidentaux* (St. Petersburg, 1903).